norms including Vintage Allowance for VIIth Pricing Period, which will be effective from 1.7.1997, is under consideration of the Government.

Subsidy to fertilizer users

†3363. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would consider any plan to provide subsidy on chemical fertilizers direct to the users, instead of providing the same to their manufacturers;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that due to the present system of giving subsidy, the consumers are not getting its benefits; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) There is no plan at present to provide subsidy on chemical fertilizers directly to the users because it is felt that it is administratively very difficult and cumbersome to provide subsidy directly to farmers.

(c) and (d) In order to make available fertilizers at affordable prices to farmers, the Government provides subsidy on urea and concession on decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilizers. Government fixes Maximum Retail Price (MRP) in case of urea, the only controlled fertilizer and indicates MRPs in case of decontrolled P&K fertilizers. The MRPs of Single Super Phosphate are indicated by respective State Governments. The fertilizers are sold at uniform MRP and indicative MRPs, as the case may be, to the farmers throughout the country, which are far less than the cost of production of fertilizers. The subsidy/concession is paid to fertilizer manufacturers which consequently benefits the farmers. Thus, the benefit is passed on to farmers in the form of uniform and subsidised MRPs.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.